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as contributions to an important branch of science hitherto much neglected, but as having a practical bearing on the welfare of the people and the development of the State, the value of which can hardly be overestimated. In no portion of the world is there a better chance for an establishment having in view the thorough investigation of earthquake phenomena. The great plain of the Sacramento and the San Joaquin should for a time be connected with San Francisco galvanically, by wires proceeding from the branch observatories at properly selected localities. Seismometers of the most approved construction should be set up, and their records compared with the other results of every important shock, as shown in the effect on buildings and on the surface of the ground, and in all the other methods of which Mr. Mallet's book furnishes so excellent a model.

Of Herr Volger's volume and theory something may be said at another time, in discussing the various theories of the nature of the forces involved in the phenomena of volcanoes and earthquakes.

J. D. WHITNEY.

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#### ART. VIII. — THE SESSION.

THERE is much reason to regret that every voter in the United States cannot be compelled, at some period of his life, to visit Washington, for the purpose of obtaining the passage, through the various stages of legislation, of some little bill, interesting only to himself, and perhaps having "a little money in it." The lesson would be a useful one. As the visitor cast from the lobby a momentary glance through the swinging doors of the House, and was bewildered by the crash and war of jealous and hostile interests within, — as he felt how his own just and proper request was the sport of a thousand accidents, — as he appreciated the difficulties in the way of getting a committee to report his bill at all, and the still greater difficulty of putting it on its passage, and as he then watched it float here and there in the eddying current of legis-

lation, he would be better able for the future to understand one of the greatest difficulties of Government. Within the walls of two rooms are forced together in close contact the jealousies of thirty-five millions of people, — jealousies between individuals, between cliques, between industries, between parties, between branches of the Government, between sections of the country, between the nation and its neighbors. As years pass on, the noise and confusion, the vehemence of this scramble for power or for plunder, the shouting of reckless adventurers, of wearied partisans, and of red-hot zealots in new issues, — the boiling and bubbling of this witches' caldron, into which we have thrown eye of newt and toe of frog and all the venomous ingredients of corruption, and from which is expected to issue the future and more perfect republic, — in short, the conflict and riot of interests, grow more and more overwhelming; the power of obstructionists grows more and more decisive in the same proportion as the business to be done increases in volume; the effort required to accomplish necessary legislation becomes more and more serious; the machine groans and labors under the burden, and its action becomes spasmodic and inefficient. The capacity of our Government to reconcile these jarring interests, to control refractory dissentients, and to preserve an appearance of governing, is already tested to its utmost, and one can, while watching the embarrassments of Congress, scarcely think without alarm of the day, already so near, when the country will have to support, first fifty, then one hundred millions of people, their passions sharpened by the increasing energy of the struggle for existence. Even this prospect, however, is comparatively bright, so long as the population remains tolerably homogeneous; but with the absorption into our system of Canada, Mexico, and the West Indies, on which it would be a great mistake to suppose that popular feeling is less firmly bent now than formerly, one can scarcely conceive a method by which the mere duties of necessary legislation could be performed at all.

A curious example of the manner in which public business is now done was drawn out very recently in the Dyer court-martial in Washington. The joint committee of Congress

had made a report filled with charges against General Dyer, of which General Dyer complained, and upon which he demanded a court of inquiry. The Government did not itself prosecute the charge, but left this duty to Mr. Clifford Arrick and other interested parties. By dexterous management, General Dyer's counsel, Mr. Dudley Field, enticed Mr. Arrick upon the witness-stand, and there elicited the fact that Mr. Arrick was himself the author of the Congressional Report of the joint committee which had impeached General Dyer. We do not wish to anticipate the decision of General Thomas, General Hancock, and the other members of the Commission of Inquiry; but General Dyer has been injured in reputation and put to anxiety and to expense he could ill afford, the Government has been attacked and obliged to institute a most costly inquiry, and Congress has placed itself in a most unfortunate and mortifying position, all because the joint committee had not the time to do its work properly, and employed an unfit person, without due caution.

The late Session has shown more clearly than ever the necessity of finding some means of improving our legislative machinery. Underneath a thousand personal matters, which, like so many mosquitoes, annoy and distract the attention of legislators, there are always a few great questions in which all public interests have their root, and from which all important legislation must take its start. When Congress met in December last, action was required on certain points: Reconstruction, Re-establishment of the Executive in its Privileges and Proper Functions, Revenue Reform, Monetary Reform, Administrative Reform, Internal Improvements, Foreign Policy. We believe it is simple truth to say that not one of these subjects received anything but superficial attention; and yet we have no intention of charging Congress with any wilful neglect of duty. That there was great waste of valuable time no one can deny; but that Congress could, by the strictest possible economy of its means, have given proper study and attention to all these subjects, scarcely any one would venture to assert. If, therefore, in calling attention to the short-comings of the Session, we seem to criticise more sharply than is just, it is not that we wish to throw undeserved blame on Congress, but

that the system itself is at fault, and has failed to expand with the expansion of the country. On this subject we shall have more to say in the sequel. Leaving aside for the present the question of what has not been done by Congress, let us examine the merits of the actual work of the Session.

Reconstruction naturally comes first in the list of subjects claiming public attention, although Reconstruction, thanks to the general acquiescence of the country in the result of the November elections, and thanks also to the increasing prosperity which has drawn the attention of the Rebel States to more profitable matters, has lost much of its old prominence in politics. Nevertheless, the point of negro-suffrage was thought to require attention, and even to need acknowledgment as part of the fundamental law of the land. Like most of the measures adopted by Congress, the Constitutional Amendment is more remarkable for what it does not than for what it does contain. Beau Brummell's valet was one day met on his master's stairs with a bundle of crumpled neck-cloths on his arm, and being asked what on earth he had there, answered, with a modesty tinged with becoming pride: "These are our failures." Congress, too, has had its failures, and the neck-tie with which it proposes at last to adorn the statue of American Liberty is the result of many efforts. Apart from the general doubt whether it is advisable to insert in the Constitution such special provisions, there is little in this Fifteenth Amendment to which we can fairly object. The dogma that suffrage is a natural right, and not a trust, is by implication denied. The "right" to hold office, as well as to vote, is not asserted. Educational and even property qualifications are not excluded. We know little of legal ingenuity, if it is not found that this Amendment is of small practical value. Its sting and its danger rest in the possible abuse of the power granted to Congress by the second section, to enforce the article by such legislation as it may deem appropriate.

As Congress postponed action in regard to the status of Georgia, we are relieved from the necessity of discussing this difficult question. The responsibility of deciding it must now rest on the present Congress, whose action we do not care to anticipate. At the same time we can scarcely think that

inaction in regard to so serious a legal difficulty was a satisfactory mode of dealing with it. It is true that Georgia is not likely to run away in the mean while ; but it is also true that inaction is equivalent to a confession of incompetency, and that of such confessions we have far too many.

Passing on to the second great subject of public anxiety, the restoration to the Executive of its proper control, we touch already upon very dangerous ground, where a battle is unavoidable and imminent. General Butler, in pressing with so much earnestness the repeal of the Tenure-of-Office Bill, scarcely took the trouble to conceal his opinion that sooner or later a struggle for power must arise between the Senate and the House, with or without the aid of the President. The Senate gave countenance to this opinion by its conduct in regard to the repeal. To allege as a cause of inaction its fear of a triumphant lecture from President Johnson had not only more the appearance of giving a pretext than a reason, but was an implied rebuff to the House, which was, or might have been supposed to be, as good a judge as the Senate of what their combined dignity should fear. This jealousy broke out again in the joint convention for counting the electoral votes ; and if General Butler's manner had not put him in the wrong, he would have won far more sympathy than showed itself. In whatever light the Senate may be considered, it is not a popular body, and can command popular support only in consequence of the mistakes of its rivals. For this reason the whole country waited with extreme anxiety, after the Senate's refusal to act on the Tenure-of-Office Bill until General Grant should announce his Cabinet ; and if politicians became more and more uneasy as the delay was prolonged, it was because they felt that any mistake made by General Grant at the outset of his career would result in strengthening the hold which the Senate had acquired upon political patronage and power. The idea now so popular, that politicians are bad counsellors, is one of the most unfortunate mistakes of our day. There are politicians of all sorts, and the dishonest class no doubt would be bad advisers ; but to exclude politicians would imply also the exclusion of statesmen, and to conduct the Government without the aid of trained statesmen is as dangerous as

to conduct a war without the aid of trained generals. When Congress saw that General Grant placed himself in isolation, the annoyance was extreme, and was entirely justified by the event. It is to be hoped that no future President will repeat the experiment, least of all in critical times.

We do not mean by this to express any unfavorable opinion of General Grant's Cabinet, to which this Review has only good wishes and support to offer ; but it is obvious, that, if the balance of our government is to be restored, there must be no more mistakes in administration, and no hazardous experiments, whose failure may shake public confidence. We shall have something to say presently of the reforms which the Executive should attempt ; but its immediate policy is one of caution and conciliation, not one of heroism. The mere repeal of the Tenure-of-Office Bill cannot at once restore its prestige, or wrest from Congress the initiative which Congress is now accustomed to exercise. The Senate has no idea of abandoning its control of power, either with or without the Tenure-of-Office Bill ; and the people alone, acting upon the Lower House, after a fair trial of the new Administration, can re-establish the Presidency in spite of the Senate, and restore harmony to the political system. General Grant and his Cabinet, no matter whether they are men of metal or men of straw, must accept the fact that our system of government has practically suffered a modification, from which no power but that of patient wisdom can retrieve it ; and if the influence of General Grant himself, or of his Cabinet, is exerted in the direction of isolated action, however brilliant, the chances are that our system will be permanently fixed on a new and not an improved basis. On the question, therefore, of restoring its powers to the Executive, Congress failed to take action, as it had failed to take action in regard to Georgia.

The case was no better in regard to reform in the revenue system. Mr. Schenck, it is true, did his utmost for the passage of the improved internal-revenue law, consolidating all the previous revenue acts, but without success. Meanwhile, Mr. Wells, in his annual Report, had, for the first time, called public attention to the character of the Tariff. His Report was a simple and business-like document, avoiding carefully all theo-

retical flightiness, containing no praises of free-trade, advocating no extreme legislation, but merely pointing out, in a way so clear that no one could misunderstand the evidence, his reasons for thinking that our present customs-duties are mischievous and need reform. Mr. Wells has by no means exhausted the subject ; on the contrary, he has as yet done little more than to open discussion. He has rigidly abstained, with a care that does him great credit, from the wide and philosophical treatment of this question, which he was perfectly able to give, but for which neither President, Congress, press, nor people are as yet prepared. He has no party to serve, no interest to enrich, nor any "ring" to work for. We need scarcely say that we give to him and to the principles of his Report, as we should give to every liberal and honest movement, a hearty support. There is still less necessity for adding that in Congress Mr. Wells is not strong, and that no action was suggested in the sense of his recommendations.

No sooner had Mr. Wells's Report been published than a cry of rage arose from Pennsylvania. A swarm of stinging insects darted out from that mass of protected interests, and, what was more significant, they were met by another body, equally active, which came spontaneously from the working classes to defend and affirm the statements of Mr. Wells. The controversy in the Middle States has raged all winter with fury. We confess that our interest in its result would be less lively, if we looked at it merely from an economical point of view ; but in this respect we are not obliged to follow Mr. Wells, and prefer to go beyond him. The Tariff, as it stands, is indeed grossly extravagant and partial, but its direct economical result is only to neutralize a certain amount of labor, to throw away so many days' work in every year without any return of any kind. The nation is young and overflowing with animal strength, and the mere pecuniary loss could be borne. But unfortunately this is not all ; nor is the story finished, when Mr. Wells adds, that the rich are daily becoming richer, and the poor poorer. Behind this there is a political result of far greater moment, in the debauching effect of the system upon parties, public men, and the morals of the State.



Few men who are accustomed to watch the course of Washington politics will be at a loss to understand the difficulty of Mr. Wells's position, or the reason why his efforts have found so little co-operation in Congress. We are touching here upon a delicate subject, but we have no office to ask of any generous constituency, and can afford to say what every one already knows. The condition of parties precludes the chance of reform. The "rings" which control legislation — those iron, or whiskey, or Pacific Railway, or other interests, which have their Congressional representatives, who vote themselves the public money — do not obtain their power for nothing. Congressmen themselves, as a class, are not venal, it is true. Perhaps not more than one member in ten of the late Congress ever accepted money. But though Congress itself has still a sense of honor, party organizations have no decency and no shame. The "rings" obtain their control of legislation by paying liberally towards the support of these party organizations, Republican or Democratic, as the case may be; and the distiller or iron-founder who pays his five or ten thousand dollars towards the expenses of his party has as fair a claim upon it as Judge Pierrepont, or any other honest man, and is more certain to force his claim against opposition. Parties cannot escape the obligations thus incurred; and the result is, that these interests combine in Congress for mutual protection, and members who are by their tastes well disposed towards reform dare not move a finger. A network of rings controls Congress, and forms a hedge which marks the limit within which argument and reason may prevail. When the President sent in his veto to the Copper Bill, — a veto which was certainly not his own composition, if one may judge from its form, — all the iniquity of the law could not win over the two votes necessary to sustain the veto, although members in plenty approved it, and would have voted for it, had the vote been taken by count, and not by yeas and nays. The rings whipped into line the recalcitrant members. Perhaps the most creditable vote given this winter was that of Mr. Senator Sumner, who, on this sole occasion, sustained President Johnson.

Mr. Wells, therefore, can do nothing, except to place his arguments before the people, and wait until some party finds its

interest involved in supporting him. We are unable to say whether General Grant himself, or his Cabinet, will be disposed to undertake the superhuman task of reforming party organizations and purifying Congress. The simpler task of economy, or what the French call *économie de bouts de chandelles*, has thus far seemed to satisfy them. To follow out the path indicated by Mr. Wells, to clean and purify the national legislature, and to break down by main force one of the strongest supports of party corruption, can be done only by reforming the revenue system, and placing stringent restrictions upon all grants of the public money. Not merely, therefore, as a matter of political economy, but as one of political reform, the policy of Mr. Wells demands the support of the Administration. At this moment everything tends to increase the dictatorial power of parties. Even the new Constitutional Amendment seems to have this inevitable result, of swelling the blind, unreasoning vote which follows mechanically a party standard, and thus encourages and protects party corruption. We submit that Government is wrong in plundering the people in order to support party organizations, and that the system of protecting special interests should be reformed.

If the public waits for Congress to move in this direction, it will wait long, and it will wait in vain. And in the same way we can expect little or nothing from Congress towards administrative reform. Suddenly, in the middle of the Session, the new whiskey-tax broke down. New York was no longer the favorite haunt of distillers. They had retired to the West, and there they again succeeded in cheating the Government, — necessarily by collusion with Government officials. Mr. Jenckes's Civil-Service Bill lay untouched on the Clerk's table. We are not enthusiastic admirers of Mr. Jenckes's bill, but we do insist that a decent self-respect should oblige Congress to show or feign some disposition to purge the civil service from the taint of political corruption. The country, after an experience which for a time brought it literally within sight of disorganization, has at last nearly escaped its dangers, not by reform, but by prosperity and good luck. The Government, under a war-pressure, instituted a system of internal revenue, and in the attempt to enforce its laws was utterly defeated by

private interests. The taxes were therefore reduced, and will ultimately be abandoned. But the time must come, and may come sooner than is commonly supposed, when a foreign war will force us back to the internal revenue system as our only source of income, and there is no risk in predicting that a few more years of the old system of internal revenue would leave little sound material in our Government. So virulent a source of corruption was never known in our national experience. For this reason we are inclined to think that such national prosperity as would allow our Government to escape, without obliging it to meet and overcome its difficulties, would in the end prove a national disaster. The people of the United States already have become too much accustomed to the idea that they can violate with impunity every fundamental principle of good government.

The dependence of civil offices upon political influence is a support even more essential to party organizations than are the protected interests which Mr. Wells has attacked. There is little disposition in Congress, and there is still less in either party organization, to introduce such a separation between politics and the civil service as would purify both. The evil is rooted in popular habit; it springs from the people; it was created by the people; it is maintained for the people; and yet we venture to assert that the mere fact of bringing this temptation into party strife will ultimately, if continued long enough, break down the Government. The Democratic party, if wrong otherwise, is yet perfectly right in asserting that corruption is no peculiar fault of its own; for the fault lies, not in the party, but in the system, which for both parties is the same. So long as party organizations remain what they are, honesty in the long run is impossible; corruption must be the rule, and not the exception. General Grant may, indeed, purify the revenue service, but his successor will with much less effort corrupt it again, unless the public takes its stand upon some solid principle which shall remove the Government patronage from the shifting influence of politics. This is a matter which has nothing to do with law; it is custom that should rule; and until the natural good sense of the people, acting over the heads of all party organizations, shall decide the point that no

officer of the Government shall be removed from his post for merely political reasons, except in a few specified cases, honesty is not likely to prevail, nor are parties likely to be pure.

We have ventured to dwell a little on these two points of reform, — the abolition of Government grants to favored interests, and the withdrawal of Government patronage, so far as practicable, from party organizations, — not so much because they were mentioned during the late Session, as because the House, and even General Grant, seemed to be carried away by the idea that economy and proper care in selecting persons for appointments would cure all our national ills. Economy is in itself not a policy; it is, or should be, a condition of existence, and no government should boast of it any more than a gentleman should boast of sobriety. A government that understands its duties is economical always, even in its extravagance. We see a healthy and useful reaction in this tendency to pare cheese-rinds, but we protest against the idea that this is a policy of reform, or that General Grant should be considered as a sort of presidential terrier chosen to snap at vermin in the public offices. What the country needs is not a narrow and pinching economy, nor even a merely honest administration, that during its term of office will heal over the running sores of our body politic, with a certainty that they will again break out at the first change of circumstances, — but a wise and careful correction of the system itself. We can see no reason why a democracy should be necessarily corrupt. We believe that a timely reform may long postpone the day when corruption will become intolerable, but we should augur the worst of the effect that another great shock to the country in its present loose condition would produce upon our whole system of government, and we maintain that the first and last duty of Congress and the President is to draw from the experience of the last ten years a lesson as to the PRINCIPLES OF REFORM. The country is not permanently aided by piecemeal legislation to stop abuses which spring from radical difficulties; nor can the nation in the long run respect a Government which announces, that, as Pacific Railways and other great national works breed corruption, therefore they cannot be constructed. So far as we understand the object of creating

governments, it is that they may do the work of governing; and we should like to know for what earthly purpose Presidents and Congressmen are elected, except to perform this duty, and to see at their peril that no corruption follows. It is their duty to prevent or to cure corruption; but it is also their duty to do the work, to collect the revenue, to build, or cause to be built, whatever public works it comes within their province to provide for, to employ officers, and to see that they are efficient and faithful. A more extraordinary claim to popular respect than that advanced in defence of the late Session, on the ground that it stopped many extravagant schemes, could scarcely be imagined. The schemes were no doubt extravagant, but their objects were in many cases proper and necessary, and the public has a right to insist that Congress shall do the work it was sent to do, and do it properly, or ask such reforms as will enable it to be done. Instead of this, popular wrath is met by an intolerably calm confession that there are certainly corrupt officials, but General Grant will detect them and turn them out, and never again in our national history shall corrupt officials be appointed; that it is true the revenue system has been evaded and nullified by fraud, but that it will, please God, soon be — not reformed, but — abolished; that Pacific Railways are very apt to produce corruption, and therefore it is best not to meddle with them; that political organizations are selfish and unscrupulous, but that General Grant is not a party man; that, in short, they who are charged with the Government are the most senseless and fit men for the constables of the watch, and if any man refuses to obey their orders, they are to come together and thank God they are rid of a knave. We are bound to call attention to the fact, which seems to have been forgotten, that these incessant confessions of ignorance, or of impotence, or even — pardon us the word — of imbecility, cannot, even with the best will, be considered as a performance of duty.

One administrative measure — the bill for amending the judicial system — was, however, passed in this Session, and failed only by accident, we believe, to receive President Johnson's signature. There was also one very important measure which we may class under the head of monetary re-

form, and which also failed to become law. Mr. Schenck's bill for the improvement of the public credit was a simple recognition of the financial principle established in the November election. The Supreme Court had already forestalled this measure so far as regarded the legalizing of coin contracts, and indeed it may perhaps be said that the whole bill tended rather to affirm a principle which ought never to have been brought in question than to effect any real progress in finance. Nevertheless, the measure was highly creditable to Congress and to the country, and, unless foreign complications arise, it may be considered as having brought our finances to a point where one may see a clear path to the settlement of all our financial difficulties. It is true that Mr. Schenck's bill left untouched the serious problem of a return to specie payments, or, if it indicated anything in this respect, indicated a leaning towards that favorite doctrine of "growing up to the situation," which is merely another example of what we have already so strongly criticised as the fashionable custom of confessing impotence and abnegating governmental functions. The West could not be induced to join in any settled and effective action for a re-establishment of the currency on a sound basis. But with a large surplus revenue, a rapid diminution of taxes, a reduction of interest on the debt, and a decrease in its volume, sooner or later the time must come when return to specie payments will be unavoidable. Whenever and however it comes, the process must be the same, if the national credit is to be maintained; but if the difficulty were boldly faced at present, it might, perhaps, be possible to devise some means by which the debtor class would be more equitably dealt with, and business less exposed to annoyance, than if the whole subject were left to the action of time and chance.

Yet, if it must be allowed that no progress was made during the late Session towards sound monetary principles, it is equally true that the unsound theorists gained no ground. The eloquent denunciation of gold and silver by General Butler failed to make the slightest impression on Congress, or even to provoke notice, although it was strikingly original, and in Mr. Butler's best style. "It is now admitted by all political economists," said he, "that finely engraved printing upon paper,

fixing its value, is the best of all possible substitutes for coined money. Not until the people of Greece and Rome became deteriorated by vices and luxury, yielding their liberties to tyrants, did gold and silver, the ever-ready adjuncts of despotic power in all its forms and degrees, obtain place and scope to do their appropriate and never-failing work,—the enslavement of the labor of the masses. . . . Coined gold and silver has ever been the handmaid of despotism, the prop of monarchical power, the supporter of thrones, the upholder of nobilities and priesthoods, the engine by which the privileges and pretensions of aristocrats have always been sustained in trampling down the rights, devouring the substance, and absorbing the unrequited labors of the masses. Through all time the possession of money has given power to the few to enslave the labor of the many for the benefit of princes and nobles, and its use has been the badge of servitude of all peoples to some king or tyrant. To deny this at one time was treason.”

Both as regards originality of conception and elegance of style, this passage deserved more notice than the sullen, and no doubt envious, silence with which it was received. General Garfield and his friends, in fact, asserted that the speech was contemptible and ridiculous, and that to answer it would be almost as great folly as to make it, and thus General Butler’s argument was stifled by a conspiracy of silence. Silence, indeed, on the whole subject of the currency, was an understood rule of the Session. No agreement on a common principle was possible, and Congress had, apart from monetary affairs, far more work on its hands than could possibly be attended to. Monetary reform, therefore, like administrative reform, like revenue reform, like the re-establishment of the Executive, and like the reconstruction of Georgia and the development of the national resources, was postponed.

What, then, was accomplished by this expiring Congress, besides the Constitutional Amendment and Mr. Schenck’s gold bill? In reply to this question, we might fairly say, as a sufficient answer, that the business of the Government has been carried on. To do even this as it should be done, to prepare and to pass the Appropriation Bill alone, is a prodigious effort,

and especially difficult in the short session at the close of an Administration. We may add, that economical, and even parsimonious, principles have received surprising support at the hands of the Committee on Appropriations, and that the clerks have been taught what it is to have an economical Government. But much as we admire economy, we cannot think that Molière's Harpagon is the best model of a finance minister, nor that it is good policy for a government to pay its clerks meanly. Let us starve the Cabinet, if we like, and reduce our Supreme Court to the wages of country lawyers; there remains still the honor of the position, which would tempt distinguished ability, even though there were no salary whatever to be earned. But with the subordinate posts there is no dignity, but rather degradation involved, as the service is now organized. The precarious tenure of a Government office drives away the better class of applicants. Nor is there common sense in the idea that a government which every year votes tens and hundreds of millions into the hands of favored classes, and supports a revenue and currency system far more burdensome than the national debt, should claim merit from the country for grinding a few thousand dollars from its clerks.

But we are obliged to return at last to the proposition with which we began,—that one principal reason why the public business is neglected, or inefficiently performed, is to be found in the inevitable waste of time under the present legislative system. So necessary has it proved to provide some check to this evil, that debate has, under the rules of the House, been to a great extent stopped, and measures are habitually hurried through in spite of every remonstrance, without allowing an opportunity for amendment or discussion. So long as the dominant party has sufficient strength to override opposition in this way, the expedient may answer its purpose in economizing time, but in the long run parties must be more evenly balanced, and some other expedient must be invented. One such expedient might, perhaps, be, that members should better understand their work; but as the House does not elect its own members, it can do little towards producing this result. Nor does popular feeling tend in this direction. The oldest mem-



bers of the House and the Senate have had but eighteen years' service, and this is so unusual as to be thought surprising. Yet the lessons of statesmanship, or even of statecraft, are not easily learned, especially in their higher branches ; principles of political economy, or of international law, and, above all, the limits of legislation, are matters to which trained statesmen themselves come with a humiliating confession of doubt or ignorance. As Congress is at present constituted, the trained statesmen have more than they can accomplish merely in stopping mischievous legislation. In this respect, Reconstruction has had anything but a good influence on Congress. Setting aside entirely all question as to the merits or demerits of Reconstruction in the Rebel States, there is no doubt whatever that it has brought into Congress a class of men whose influence has not been favorable, and who have increased the power of the lobby rather than the dignity of either House. Let us instance the case of Collector Smythe, who was lately appointed by President Johnson Minister to Russia, with the idea that he would be acceptable to the Senate. Senator Sumner and the Committee on Foreign Relations thought the appointment unsuitable, and we believe they were right, although Mr. Smythe could scarcely have been so unfit for the post as its present occupant. Mr. Smythe, however, laughed at the Committee. He had, as he thought, already won a majority of the Senate. He had been among the obstructionists and carpet-baggers, and secured their votes, and he hoped to march with their assistance over the prostrate bodies of Senator Sumner and his Committee. We will not pretend to say what influences he had used. We do not know. But, at all events, he had, as Collector of New York, gained influence enough with the Senate to be able to say in so many words, that, if the Senate did not confirm him, it should confirm no one ; and he did in fact succeed in stopping confirmations. Public business was kept at a stand-still in order that a ring largely composed of reconstructed Senators might force Mr. Smythe into a position for which he was unfit. Here is an example of the probable working of Senatorial government ; but it is also an illustration of the growing power of the lobby and of obstructionists in our legislature, and

of the difficulties which threaten sooner or later to bring the whole machinery of our Government to a stand-still.

Let us now turn to the Department of Foreign Affairs, or, as the Senate prefers to style it, of Foreign Relations. Congress has postponed action on points of foreign policy, as well as on most domestic matters, but their importance and the tone in which they have been discussed warrant us in going into a somewhat detailed statement of the situation. Various treaties were under consideration in the Senate, but we shall undertake to examine only those negotiated with Denmark and Great Britain.

The public, always curiously ill-informed in regard to its foreign relations, had flattered itself that the affair of St. Thomas was quietly disposed of, and even the Senate labored for a time under the delusion that the treaty would be allowed to expire without scandal or dispute. The Danish Government, however, was in a position which did not admit of withdrawal. The very weakness of Denmark, and her helpless situation as regards Germany, obliges her to struggle against humiliation, and in this matter her national pride was involved. During our war, she had behaved extremely well. The proposition to part with St. Thomas had not come from her, but had been suggested by our Government at a time when the possession of the island was a matter of great interest to the United States. She had declined at first to negotiate on any terms. The settled policy of the western European powers has always been to exclude the United States from the West Indies, since they well know that their colonial possessions in that neighborhood would be placed in great peril, if our Government once obtained a foothold among them. Denmark naturally hesitated to take a step which placed her in direct antagonism to the traditional policy of Great Britain and France, the two countries on whose sympathy she is compelled to rely. Nevertheless, after long doubt, she yielded, not merely on account of the money to be gained, (for Denmark is one of the few states in the world which do not stand in need of money,) but on the distinct principle that it was expedient to change her foreign policy and to attach herself more closely to the United States by abandoning to them her colonial possessions in our seas, and, as a conse-

quence, the ultimate control of the Antilles and of Central America. The treaty was signed, and sent to the Senate. After a sufficient lapse of time, Denmark took a vote of the people of St. Thomas on the subject, and, the result being favorable, the island was formally transferred to an authorized agent of our Government. The Senate had the treaty in its hands, but did not interfere. When the period within which ratification was required had passed without bringing any movement from the Senate, the time was by further agreement extended to October, 1869. Still the Senate made no sign. Then at last the Danish Government sent over General Raaslof, its Secretary of War, to Washington, and this gentleman, who had already been Minister here, who understood our people and was highly popular with them, who had, moreover, been principally responsible for the new policy which Denmark had adopted towards us, and whose official position, as well as that of his colleagues in the Ministry, depended upon the ratification of this treaty, undertook to disturb the serene repose of the Senate, and to insist that action should be taken.

We have little sympathy with the policy which prompted Mr. Lincoln and his Cabinet to purchases of new territory. There is a peculiar brilliancy and seductiveness in that vast scheme which, without war or ill-feeling or unnecessary expense, grasped in succession three such commanding points as Russian America, St. Thomas, and the Isthmus of Darien; the imagination is dazzled by it; and yet we should be heartily glad to discover any honorable mode of release from the obligations of the St. Thomas Treaty. We cannot in honor listen to the suggestion of General Butler, that Denmark having abandoned the island, in pursuance of a popular vote, we are now at liberty to take it without paying for it at all. The only argument which has any show of weight is, that the Senate has a constitutional right to reject the treaty, — that Denmark was perfectly aware, in fact was formally notified, of this limitation on the President's power, — and that she is therefore debarred from complaint.

The internal difficulties of a government are often most immediately felt in its foreign relations, and this is the case here. Undoubtedly the Senate has the right to reject any treaty, this

among the rest ; but the condition of holding any friendly relations whatever with the outside world requires that this right of rejection should be kept in reserve for extraordinary occasions. If the treaty betrays the national honor, if it sacrifices national territory or the rights of citizens, if it was obtained by disgraceful means, if it is untrue to a national pledge, by all means let the Senate interpose and reject it. But a proper respect for the countries with which we deal, and for international comity, which we are bound to observe, requires that in rejecting a treaty we should give strong and solid reasons for the act. We cannot conceive what strong or solid reasons the Senate can give for refusing to ratify this treaty. *Stat pro ratione voluntas*. Say it is our humor, — is Denmark answered, or is our national credit redeemed in the world's eyes ? Seven years ago our whole nation wanted St. Thomas ; now we need it no longer ; a few years hence we may again require it ; and the world must learn submission to these passing whims !

If the United States through the President had negotiated a treaty with Denmark, requiring that within a certain time she should declare war against Prussia, and our Government had bound itself to pay her seven million dollars in consideration thereof, — if this treaty were duly sent to the Senate, if Denmark thereupon did declare war in pursuance of the agreement, and if our Government then refused to perform its part of the compact, we are inclined to think that the world, without stopping long to study constitutional theories, would hold that our behavior was scurvy ; and we ourselves, as a nation, would hold and express the same opinion in regard to any foreign government that placed itself in a similar situation.

We repeat, that a sound and sufficient reason for rejecting this treaty is much to be desired ; but there is something to be desired still more earnestly, and this is, that the Senate may not assume the absolute and irresponsible control of our international affairs. There is a perfectly clear line here which it is dangerous to overstep. The confusion which such a conflict of authority would create in our foreign relations cannot be over-estimated ; for abroad, even more than at home, division of responsibility lowers the national character and destroys all

faith in national pledges. As regards foreign nations, the President, and not the Senate, is the representative and the spokesman of the United States; and if the Senate intervenes without so sound a reason as must convince the world that intervention is right and necessary, the only result must be to degrade the Presidential authority, and with it the national dignity, in the eyes of other governments. Hitherto there has been so seldom any occasion for appealing to this principle, that it has sometimes in practice been overlooked; but the present occasion is a grave one; in spite of our own wishes, we are compelled to say, that the rejection of this treaty would be an unwarrantable and mischievous act.

The position in regard to the English treaties is somewhat different; since, in the first place, there is no special reason for being civil to England; and, in the second place, no action was stipulated, or has been taken under these treaties, by which any one has been compromised. The treaties, therefore, are a fair subject for rejection, if there is reason to reject them. We will even go so far as to say that they ought to be rejected by the Senate, unless they fully accord every demand our Government has ever made on Great Britain. We frankly confess that Great Britain is not entitled at our hands to any delicacy of treatment whatever. There are still a few persons in America who have reason to remember Lord Palmerston, and the happy manner of that nobleman did much to keep his memory fresh in this country.

There have been three grave difficulties existing between England and the United States during the last few years, — difficulties partly of long standing, dating back to the foundation of our Government, and partly resulting from the war. Mr. Seward, who was seldom satisfied with a small policy, as we have already noticed in the cases of Alaska, St. Thomas, and Darien, undertook to combine the three subjects of dispute with England and produce a comprehensive scheme of settlement, which should, perhaps, (although this is a mere inference on our part,) establish such friendly relations between the two countries as would in time lead England to the same point to which Denmark had been led. The foreign policy of Mr. Seward was, in principle, simple enough, although his expedi-

ents were innumerable. His intention was always to avoid war, but always to gain his objects ; and he achieved astonishing success.

The San Juan affair offered no serious difficulty. It was readily referred to arbitration. The naturalization controversy threatened for a long time to prove a serious obstacle, and accordingly Mr. Seward, spurred on no doubt by the President and Congress, gave precedence to this subject, and pressed earnestly for a settlement. Lord Stanley made no opposition, and a protocol was accordingly signed, by which the British Government abandoned all its old theories of citizenship, and conceded all, and more than all, that had ever been asked by the United States.

There remained the serious question of claims, arising out of violations of English neutrality by the Rebels during our late war : a difficult subject, involving new principles of international law, binding England now, but binding us also for all future time ; a subject which ought not to be made the football of party warfare, or even of national antipathies ; a subject, too, in regard to which the United States Government ought to be peculiarly cautious in establishing precedents. No strong nation has an interest in restricting the limits of its own action, least of all when it will inevitably be the first to overthrow the very law it has established.

Early in our national history, the United States occupied, as regarded Great Britain, a position similar in some respects to that which Great Britain now occupies as regards the United States. In the year 1793, the French Republic, acting, as it claimed, under treaty stipulations, caused cruisers to be fitted out in our ports, which captured British vessels even within our territorial jurisdiction, and caused the British Minister to address energetic remonstrances and claims of indemnity to our Secretary of State. Mr. Jefferson acknowledged the justice of these claims. Such of the captured vessels as our Government could reach were taken by force from the captors, and restored to their owners. In the face of great difficulties, the United States faithfully performed all its duties as a neutral towards Great Britain. Nevertheless, claims for the value of such captured vessels as had not been recovered were made by

the British Government, and by the treaty of 1794 the justice of these claims was conceded, and they were referred, together with other pecuniary demands made by citizens of both nations, to a commission of five persons, two to be appointed by the British King, two by the President, subject to confirmation by the Senate, and one by the unanimous choice of the other four, or, in case of disagreement, by lot between two persons named by either party. The decision of three of these commissioners was to be final, provided one on each side and the fifth were present. The commission was to meet in Philadelphia, and to decide all claims and receive all evidence which the commissioners might think consistent with equity and justice.

The last paragraph of the seventh article of this treaty runs as follows : —

“And whereas certain merchants and others, His Majesty’s subjects, complain that in the course of the war they have sustained loss and damage by reason of the capture of their vessels and merchandise, taken within the limits and jurisdiction of the States, and brought into the ports of the same, or taken by vessels originally armed in ports of the said States, it is agreed that in all such cases, where restitution shall not have been made agreeably to the tenor of the letter from Mr. Jefferson to Mr. Hammond, dated at Philadelphia, September 5, 1793, a copy of which is annexed to this treaty, the complaints of the parties shall be, and hereby are, referred to the commissioners to be appointed by virtue of this article, who are hereby authorized and required to proceed in the like manner relative to these ‘as to the other cases committed to them; and the United States undertake to pay to the complainants or claimants, in specie, without deduction, the amount of such sums as shall be awarded to them respectively by the said commissioners, and at the times and places which in such awards shall be specified, and on condition of such releases or assignments to be given by the claimants as in the said awards may be directed; and it is further agreed, that not only the now existing cases of both descriptions, but also all such as shall exist at the time of exchanging the ratifications of this treaty, shall be considered as being within the provisions, intent, and meaning of this article.”

There is this difference between the British claims of 1794 and the Alabama claims of 1869,—that in the latter case there had been no capture of vessels within neutral jurisdiction, nor

any actual arming of cruisers in British ports. The arming was constructive. Nor was the British Government directly responsible for the escape of all these unarmed, unmanned, and unequipped vessels from British ports. Except in the case of the *Alabama*, and, perhaps, the *Florida*, the British Government had acted, or tried to act, and had done what was required by its laws for the fulfilment of its international obligations. In establishing a claim for the depredations of the *Florida*, the *Shenandoah*, and so forth, our Government took the ground that the British Government ought to have amended its laws, and that these vessels, after escaping, ought to have been excluded from all British ports, or even to have been seized wherever they had come within British jurisdiction. Again, that our whole claim might be covered, even this argument needed to be supported by the general principle that the premature declaration of belligerency by the British Government had given these cruisers the only status they ever had, and therefore had made Great Britain responsible for all damages that ensued.

This argument, though satisfactory as a ground of war, has its disadvantages as the basis of a pecuniary claim. It is loose; it is susceptible of gross abuse in the hands of a strong nation against a weak one; it appears to apply no more to England than to France and Spain, since their action was simultaneous, and Rebel cruisers received the same treatment from each of these powers; nor can we understand how England can be required to pay, for example, for the mischief done by the *Sumter*, and Spain be excused; finally, its gravest objection is, that it establishes a new rule of international law, restricting our own sovereignty and hampering our right of action in a manner which the nation will never admit in its own practice.

Our Government knew these objections, and, though fixed in its determination to force England into a settlement, did not undertake to insist upon a settlement on these terms. From the beginning it considered the subject as a proper one for argument and arbitration, although no formal offer of arbitration was ever made on its part. All that was done was to present the claim. Mr. Adams's note to Lord Russell, of May



20th, 1865, stated nine distinct points in the argument; the first and ninth ran as follows:—

“1. That the act of recognition by Her Majesty’s Government of insurgents as belligerents on the high seas, before they had a single vessel afloat, was precipitate and unprecedented.”

“9. That the injuries thus received by a country which has meanwhile sedulously endeavored to perform all its obligations, owing to the imperfection of the legal means at hand to prevent them, as well as the unwillingness to seek for more stringent powers, are of so grave a nature as in reason and justice to constitute a valid claim for reparation and indemnification.”—*Mr. Adams to Lord Russell*, May 20th, 1865.

Lord Russell, for some reason of his own, waited until the 30th of August, and then responded as follows:—

“It appears to Her Majesty’s Government that there are but two questions by which the claim of compensation could be tested. The one is: Have the British Government acted with due diligence, or, in other words, with good faith and honesty, in the maintenance of the neutrality they proclaimed? The other is: Have the law officers of the Crown properly understood the Foreign Enlistment Act, when they declined, in June, 1862, to advise the detention and seizure of the *Alabama*, and on other occasions when they were asked to detain other ships building or fitting in British ports? It appears to Her Majesty’s Government that neither of these questions could be put to a foreign government with any regard to the dignity and character of the British Crown and the British nation. Her Majesty’s Government are the sole guardians of their own honor. They cannot admit that they may have acted with bad faith in maintaining the neutrality they professed. The law officers of the Crown must be held to be better interpreters of a British statute than any foreign government can be presumed to be. Her Majesty’s Government must therefore decline either to make reparation and compensation for the captures made by the *Alabama*, or to refer the question to any foreign State.”—*Lord Russell to Mr. Adams*, August 30th, 1865.

By this note the British Government declined an offer of arbitration which had never been made, and absolutely refused to admit the possibility of entertaining the idea of indemnity. The United States Government contented itself with quietly insisting, and for a time the discussion ceased. Lord Palmerston died. Lord Clarendon succeeded Earl Russell in the Foreign Office, but no advance was made. In June, 1866, Lord

Stanley and a conservative ministry came into power, and justified the old maxim of our diplomatic service that a conservative ministry is always the easiest for America to deal with. On the 27th of August, Mr. Seward sent to him a list of our claims, with an invitation to enter into a comprehensive settlement. Lord Stanley was well disposed to do so, but was fettered by the acts of Earl Russell and Earl Clarendon; nevertheless, he responded, on the 30th of November, 1866, by an offer of limited arbitration:—

“It is impossible for Her Majesty’s present advisers to abandon the ground which has been taken by former governments so far as to admit the liability of this country for the claims then and now put forward. They do not think that such liability has been established according to international law or usage; and though sincerely and earnestly desiring a good understanding with the United States, they cannot consent to purchase even the advantage of that good understanding by concessions which would at once involve a censure on their predecessors in power, and be an acknowledgment, in their view uncalled for and unfounded, of wrong-doing on the part of the British Executive and Legislature. But, on the other hand, they are fully alive to the inconvenience which arises from the existence of unsettled claims of this character between two powerful and friendly governments. They would be glad to settle this question, if they can do so consistently with justice and national respect; and with this view they will not be disinclined to adopt the principle of arbitration, provided that a fitting arbitrator can be found, and that an agreement can be come to as to the points to which arbitration shall apply. Of these two conditions, the former need not at present be discussed; the latter is at once the more important and the more pressing. With regard to the ground of complaint on which most stress is laid in Mr. Seward’s despatch, viz.: the alleged premature recognition of the Confederate States as a belligerent power, it is clear that no reference to arbitration is possible. The act complained of, while it bears very remotely on the claims now in question, is one as to which every State must be held to be the sole judge of its duty; and there is, so far as I am aware, no precedent for any government consenting to submit to the judgment of a foreign power, or of an international commission, the question whether its policy has or has not been suitable to the circumstances in which it was placed.”—*Lord Stanley to Sir F. Bruce*, November 30th, 1866.

Before taking this ground, Lord Stanley had sounded leading Liberals, and had ascertained that they were in sympathy

with him in rejecting unlimited arbitration. He had therefore succeeded for the first time in uniting all parties in England on his American policy. Our diplomatic correspondence shows that Mr. Bright remonstrated earnestly against the ground taken by Mr. Seward, whom he suspected of acting in bad faith, with the hidden purpose of preventing a settlement. Mr. Seward only replied, that he knew the American people better than Mr. Bright did.

Mr. Seward replied to Lord Stanley on the 12th of January, 1867:—

“The United States think it not only easier and more desirable that Great Britain should acknowledge and satisfy the claims for indemnity which we have submitted than it would be to find an equal and wise arbitrator who would consent to adjudicate them. If, however, Her Majesty’s Government, for reasons satisfactory to them, should prefer the remedy of arbitration, the United States would not object. The United States, in that case, would expect to refer the whole controversy, just as it is found in the correspondence which has taken place between the two governments, with such further evidence and arguments as either party may desire, without imposing restrictions, conditions, or limitations upon the umpire, and without waiving any principle or argument on either side. They cannot consent to waive any question upon the consideration that it involves a point of national honor; and, on the other hand, they will not require that any question of national pride or honor shall be expressly ruled and determined as such.”—*Mr. Seward to Mr. Adams*, January 12th, 1867.

Lord Stanley then wrote to Sir Frederick Bruce on the 9th of March:—

“To such an extensive and unlimited reference Her Majesty’s Government cannot consent, for this reason among others, that it would admit of, and indeed compel, the submission to the arbiter of the very question which I have already said they cannot agree to submit.”—*Lord Stanley to Sir F. Bruce*, March 9th, 1867.

On the 16th of April, Mr. Seward took his old position again:—

“While we agree that all mutual claims which arose during the civil war between the citizens and subjects of the two countries ought to be amicably adjusted, and adjusted soon, we must nevertheless insist that they be adjusted by one and the same form of tribunal, with like or the

same forms, and upon principles common to all of them. The proposal of Her Majesty's Government is therefore respectfully declined by the President of the United States. — *Mr. Seward to Mr. Adams*, April 16th, 1867.

The second effort, therefore, resulted in moving the British Government so far as to concede the general principle that the claims were a proper subject for negotiation, and to offer of its own accord a reference to arbitration, if the question as to the declaration of belligerency were omitted. The United States accepted the principle of arbitration, but refused to omit any part of the argument. Mr. Seward now subsided again into silence, and left the British Government to reflect upon the situation. Sir Frederick Bruce died. Mr. Adams retired. Mr. Seward's own retirement was near at hand, and Lord Stanley had but a slender hold on his post. One more effort was felt to be necessary, in view of the hazards involved in leaving the question open.

A new expedient now occurred to our Government. On examination of the Claims Convention of 1853, it was found to contain the following general expression in regard to evidence offered to the Commission : —

“The Commissioners . . . shall be bound to receive and peruse all written documents or statements which may be presented to them by or on behalf of their respective governments in support of or in answer to any claim.” The arbitrator was under the same obligation.

This form of convention, if adopted without any change, would satisfy all the requirements of the situation. The argument as to premature recognition would be admitted, and the British Government was at liberty to excuse its concession on the ground that it was merely re-adopting the Convention of 1853, which had proved so successful. Mr. Reverdy Johnson was accordingly despatched with the Convention of 1853 in his hand. He found Lord Stanley anxious to effect a settlement, and he negotiated a convention which was, as he supposed, conformable to his instructions. Lord Stanley abandoned his own ground as completely as he had abandoned the ground taken by his predecessors. But this was not enough. When the treaty arrived in Washington in November last, it was

found that Mr. Johnson had departed more widely than was approved from the text of 1853. Mr. Seward sent word that more concessions were required. Our Government actually dictated the treaty in its own words, and, as though to complete the revenge, Lord Stanley, the signer of the November treaty, represented the conservative party, and Lord Clarendon, representing Earl Russell and the memory of Lord Palmerston, put his name to the final treaty of December.

Our national history furnishes no other example of such diplomatic triumph. Within three years, England yielded in rapid succession every point we had ever claimed. Well may the "Times" say that she had gone to the verge of humiliation! Had she in 1862 foreseen any such result, she would have followed the suggestion of France, and there would have been combined interference of the great powers in our affairs. This end was what Lord Palmerston feared, when he hesitated so long as to the policy to be pursued, and was outvoted, it is said, in the Cabinet.

The Senate has decided to reject this treaty for reasons of its own. We have no intention of criticising the Senate's action, and if, in rejecting this treaty, any better form of settlement is suggested, if the difficulty is merely one of form and not of substance, the new Administration will be able to carry on the negotiation as before. But if the objection to the treaty is essential and absolute, the implication is that our Government has conceded too much. Our Government has conceded nothing, however, except the principle of arbitration. How, then, after the Senate's absolute rejection of the treaty, can any President again propose or accept arbitration on these claims?

To reject arbitration in regard to a matter like this, which is peculiarly suitable for arbitration, and requires disinterested judgment, is equivalent to saying that we intend to take the law into our own hands. We declare ourselves in the right, and we require this fact to be acknowledged as a preliminary to further negotiation. When we say that the principles of adjudication must be established before creating a commission to adjudicate upon the claims, we mean that *our* principles must be established; otherwise we have no cause for refusing arbitration.

Now let us for a moment suppose a foreign minister in Wash-

ington meditating upon this problem: "What object has the United States Government in refusing arbitration on the Alabama claims?" He would dismiss at once the idea that this action was due to a mere passing ebullition of spite against the late Cabinet. The determination to reject is not restricted to the opponents of Mr. Seward. He might perhaps ask himself for a moment, whether it were not due to a wish to conciliate President Grant; but why should General Grant himself desire to hamper his whole administration by so serious a complication? The mere gratification of a long-nursed wrath against England might explain the action of some Senators, but not of all. We regret to add, that the diplomatist would not entertain the idea that the Senate was influenced by any virtuous devotion to the improvement of international law; for he would feel confident, and with reason, that, if England offered to cede Canada to the United States, on condition of being relieved of these claims, the Senate would immediately assent, without giving a second thought to international law or establishing any new principle whatever. In fact, the more he considered and reconsidered all other motives for an absolute rejection of the treaty, the more confident would his conclusion be, that the idea of territorial aggrandizement lay at the bottom of Senators' minds,—or, in other words, that these claims were to be reserved and used to lead or force England into a cession of territory.

We do not mean to say that this is to be the policy of the new Administration, but we do say that this is the policy which foreign nations will attribute to it. We do not know what are the opinions of President Grant, but there is little doubt that they belong more to the camp than to the cabinet. The Secretary of State can scarcely lay down in terms the doctrine, that, as the young dace is bait to the old pike, so Canada, Cuba, and Mexico are good food for the United States; but foreign nations are quick to catch an idea, and they will spare him the trouble.

The absolute rejection of this treaty must make itself felt in the whole future policy of the new Administration towards foreign nations, causing distrust, anxiety, possible derangement of commerce, and disturbance of credit. Our securities

will be affected in value. Our politics will be confused by a new element. The situation cannot be indefinitely prolonged, and war is always within sight. The Senate practically forces this complication upon the President and the Cabinet. We have no idea of depreciating the foreign policy of the Senate, — if, indeed, the Senate is to dictate to the Secretary of State. We are confident that Mr. Sumner, as Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations, would have, and would deserve, entire confidence; but as it has already become a diplomatic maxim in Washington that it is worse than useless to negotiate with a President who is powerless to redeem his pledges, so it has become a recognized fact in Congress that the report of a regular committee cannot prevail against the lobby, backed by obstructionists and carpet-baggers.

Persons whose tastes lead them to useless speculations may amuse themselves by peering into the future as well as they can, in order to distinguish the dim outlines of the result, so far as our foreign relations are concerned. That the whole continent of North America and all its adjacent islands must at last fall under the control of the United States is a conviction absolutely ingrained in our people. Granting this result, against which, if we struggle at all, we shall struggle in vain, there are two ways of reaching it. Whether two democracies of England and America will dislike each other more or less cordially than did the United States republic and the British crown we will not decide; but if there comes an appeal to arms, no great effort of the imagination is needed to foresee a political conspiracy, which will have for its object to throw British America into the arms of the United States and British India upon the bayonets of a Russian army. This is the kind of speculation which Russia would naturally dwell upon, and which implies universal war. We prefer to think that there is a better alternative. In the darkest days of our national trials, the winter of 1861–62, when in England public opinion had been artificially roused to fever heat against our country, a few Englishmen still stood by us with a courage and a confidence which only those are likely to appreciate who had personal occasion to feel their value. Even then, when there seemed to be no light in any quarter, we clung to the idea that there

would come a day when America would have conquered all her difficulties, when her few constant friends in England should under the spur of her success have climbed to power, and when our Government and theirs should act in harmony on large and liberal principles. These men are now in the English Ministry, and have sent us our own selected treaty, which we have refused to accept. Our Government seems to threaten to use its pecuniary claims for driving a good bargain for land. We will not discuss the respectability of this policy, which is a point that every one can decide for himself. We prefer to look for the grounds of a wider settlement. We know the strength and the weakness of Great Britain. Her political interests do not lie in America, but in Asia ; and no principle is now more firmly established than that her American possessions are a source of weakness, not of strength, while a wise policy requires the concentration of all her military and naval power on her Indian possessions, and on her ways of communication with them. She must ultimately of her own accord effect this concentration, for her existence as a great nation depends upon it. On the other hand, we need not require her to cede territory, but should induce her to abandon it to itself : so it will be safer from violence than if it were a part of the British Empire. Thus she might be separated absolutely, completely, and of her own free will from all political power or interference whatever in this quarter of the globe. We believe that our foreign policy, if properly managed, can peacefully effect this result ; and we shall look with extreme interest to see whether the administration of General Grant is disposed to use with patience the slow, but, as we believe, the sure, means of diplomacy and conciliation to work out this large and permanent settlement of our English relations.

HENRY BROOKS ADAMS.